The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

The Snow.

BEAUTIFUL flakes of fleecy snow!
Whence do ye come? and whither go?

Feathery clouds into atoms flew,
So we came dancing down to you.

Why are those puffs of silvery sheen,
Glist'ning the green pine boughs between?

Only to show what beauty bright
Rivals the trees of Christmas night.

Why to that bending rosebush cling,
Till to the ground its stems ye bring?

Spirits are we of the roses fair,
Summer has often clustered there.

Why have ye hid the Earth from sight,
Under a covering cold and bright?

Earth is the Frost-king's bride, and we
Clothe her in bridal robes, you see.

Why do the objects far and near
Decked in the purest white appear?

Bidding you strive to spotless be,
Emblems are they of Purity.

Whence those beautiful scenes I see
Waiting on every hand for me?

Wonderful artist working well,
Clothes in new beauty hill and dell.

Why do ye softly, softly fall,
Wreathing with feathery wrappings all?

Silently we our part fulfil,
For he hath whispered "Peace be still." *H. H. D.*

HE THAT is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need;
If thou sorrow he will weep,
If thou wake he cannot sleep;
Thus of every grief in heart
He with thee doth bear a part.
These are certain signs to know
Faithful friend from flattering foe.

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER VII.

ALF had been sleeping too soundly to be much disturbed by the change. If he realized it at all, it was only to feel an added sense of comfort as he stretched his limbs on the straw, and the broken words he uttered in his sleep, made John understand that he was dreaming of home, and imagining himself lying in his own bed once more.

As for John, he was too thoroughly aroused this time to make sleep again possible to him. He was very sure that the man's hands had been upon him with not wholly a friendly intent. Just *what* his purpose had been in laying hold of him, he could not tell; but he felt that the excuse of keeping him from falling out of the carriage was a poor one. His only thought now, was to get away from these men, and he watched for the opportunity.

They were still for a long time —a very long time it seemed to John. He imagined that they were plotting some evil against him and Alf, so that it was a great relief when at last he heard their voices again, and became sure that they were not talking about them, or anything that concerned them.

"How far are we from Holmes's?" said one of them.

"I think it must be full five miles from here."

"There is no dog, you are quite sure?"

"Oh yes, I am sure there is no dog, unless he has got one within the last month."

"How old a man is Holmes?"

"Forty-five or fifty I should think."

"Not older than that?"

"No, I think not."

"I am glad of that."

"Why? What difference can it make to you whether he be old or young?"

"A good deal of difference."

"I really cannot see how it can make any."

"It makes a difference in this way. Old people never sleep soundly. There's a great deal more danger when there are old people in a house."

"I never thought of that."

"I think you said there were no children?"

"There are no very small children."

"That's good. Babies are always waking up at the wrong time, and one lusty outcry might prove our ruin."

"There are two boys, twelve and fourteen. These are the only children that belong to the family."

"They will not be in our way, I am sure. Are the doors kept locked very strictly?"

"Yes, very."

"That matters very little. I would about as soon try a house that is thoroughly fastened, as any other."

"I suppose you can get into almost any house?"

"I never saw one yet that I couldn't get into."

"How long have you been at this business?"

"More years than you have got fingers."

"And you have never been caught?"

"Oh yes. I take my luck like the rest of 'em. I have been bagged a few times, but that's nothing."

"You'll get your neck stretched some day."

"Not I. What do I want my neck stretched for, it's long enough now."

"Yes, but people can't always take their choice about that. If they could, I reckon there would be fewer man-tassels than there are now."

"Well, well! Let's talk on some more cheerful subject, I've had enough of that."

"Very well. What shall it be?"

"Money. That's always an agreeable subject, better than murder any day."

"You don't call hanging, murder, do you?"

"Yes, I do. What else can you call it? I don't know why it aint murder for a State to kill a man as much as it would be for *me* to kill him."

"I don't think the State looks at it exactly in that light."

"That's its true light anyway. But I told you I was not going to talk about murder, so let's try money. How did you know that Holmes was going to bring money home this week?"

"I heard him tell his wife so."

"That was while you were living with him?"

"Yes."

"And how long is it since you left there?"

"Nearly six months."

"That is a long time to remember. Are you quite sure that you are right in the time?"

"Quite sure."

"What makes you remember it so positively?"

"Because I took particular notice of what he said, at the time he was speaking; and I wrote it down in my note book as soon I went to my room."

"What did he say?"

"That on the second week of June, he was to receive the first payment on the farm, and the second, five years from this June."

"How much did he say he was to have this time?"

"Six thousand dollars, this week."

"Oh! that's a nice little sum. That will keep us in pocket money some time."

"We haven't got it yet."

"No, not exactly, but I feel as sure of it as if I was already clinking the gold in my fingers."

"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

"I don't intend there shall be any slip this time."

"I hope not, surely. And all bids fair now. Everything is in our favor. The darkness of the night, the approaching storm, all help to conceal our work."

"Yes. But I am afraid it is getting rather too dark. I can hardly see my hand before my face now."

"The darkness will make no difference."

"Unless we miss our way."

"Oh, we cannot do that. I know every step of this road as if it were my father's door yard."

"And the ways about the house after we get there. You are quite sure that you remember them perfectly?"

"Oh yes, quite sure."

"I can find my way about any place if you

give me time enough. But it is quicker work when you know just where to go to lay your hands upon what you want."

"You have been used, so long, to reaching out after money, that I suppose it is like a magnet, and would draw your fingers toward it, if you were searching in ever so dark a night."

"Oh yes. I can almost smell money now, and have nothing to do, but follow my nose, and take it."

The men both laughed at this rude joke. John was too anxious about the fate of himself and his companion to allow any other thought. He had but one wish now; to get away from these wicked men. How to accomplish this he hardly knew.

There was no way of escape, unless he could wake Alf, and prevail upon him to try slipping down from the back of the carriage on to the ground. There were so many difficulties in the way of success, lf he should attempt this plan, that he hesitated.

Alf was very sound asleep. He must necessarily make some noise in waking him. Then his reasons for wishing to leave would have to be explained, and the getting down could not be accomplished without confusion.

Could all this be done, and the robbers not be conscious of what was going on?

While he was thinking, and calculating these chances, he was brought suddenly to a decision, by hearing one of the men say to the other.

"I think we might make these boys useful in our work to-night. One of them seems to be a very slender little fellow, I think we might put him through almost any window after we had taken out a pane of glass, and this would make less noise, than trying to break up a window sash."

"I don't wish to try it," the other man replied. "No boys in my councils."

John did not wait to listen to the dispute which arose between the men, but risking everything, he shook Alf out of sleep and almost pushed him into the road, he himself jumping after him, never stopping to choose places of landing or modes of getting out, having but one thought, and that was to get free from these terrible men.

He heard one of them say to the other, "The boys are going." And the other one's reply:

"It is good riddance. We can very well spare their weight from our load." *Mrs. E. A. Bruce.*

Beast and Man are Brothers.

LITTLE one, come to my knee!
Hark, how the rain is pouring
Over the roof in the pitch-black night,
And the wind in the woods a-roaring!

Hush my darling, and listen,
Then pay for the story with kisses:
Father was lost in the pitch-black night,
In just such a storm as this is!

High up on the lonely mountains,
Where the wild men watched and waited,
Wolves in the forest, and bears in the bush,
And I on my path belated.

The rain and the night together
Came down, and the wind came after,
Bending the props of the pine tree roof,
And snapping many a rafter.

I crept along in the darkness,
Stunned, and bruised, and blinded—
Crept to a fir with thick-set boughs,
And a sheltering rock behind it.

There from the blowing and and raining
Crouching, I sought to hide me;
Something rustled, two green eyes shone,
And a wolf lay down beside me.

Little one, be not frightened;
I and the wolf together,
Side by side, through the long, long night
Hid from the awful weather.

His wet fur pressed against me;
Each of us warmed the other;
Each of us felt, in the stormy dark,
That beast and man was brother.

And when the falling forest
No longer crashed in warning,
Each of us went from our hiding-place
Forth in the wild, wet morning.

Darling, kiss me payment!
Hark, how the wind is roaring;
Father's house is a better place
When the stormy rain is pouring!

Bayard Taylor.

A GARDEN is a beautiful book, writ by the finger of God; every flower and every leaf is a letter. You have only to learn them—and he is a poor dunce who cannot, if he will, do that—to learn them and join them and then go on reading and reading. And you will find yourself carried away from the earth by the beautiful story you are going through. You do not know what beautiful thoughts grow out of ground, and seem to talk to a man. And then there are some flowers that seem to me like over-dutiful children; tend them but ever so little, and they come up and flourish, and show, as I may say, their bright and happy faces to you.—*Douglass Jerrold.*

For the Myrtle.

Thanksgiving Eve.

All the year the nuts and apples grew;
Winter snows kept warm the sleeping roots;
Spring its juices sent to leaflets new,
Summer flowers gave place to autumn fruits.
All the round year did its treasures give,
Just to crown the glad thanksgiving eve.

All the year the apple-trees wrought on,
And the forest nut-trees toiled and thrived;
All the year shone down the warm, bright sun,
Dews and rains the thirsting earth revived;
Fields were gleaned for storehouse to receive,
All to bless this rich thanksgiving eve.

All the year the Hand that made the tree,
Gave the dews and rains and quickening sun,
Full of love and mercy opened free,
And for man's dear welfare labored on.
All the year did God his blessings give,
That we might be glad, thanksgiving eve.

"Nay," they said, "you reason wrong, who say
Harvests, suns and rains and fruitful trees
All were made for this thanksgiving day:
'Tis thanksgiving day was made for these!
'Tis because our Lord did richly give,
That we make this night thanksgiving eve!"

H. A. B.

For the Myrtle.

Eddie's Opinion.

Just in front of us at church, sits a beautiful boy of three years old, with long brown curls and face that ought to be painted for a cherub. This noble little fellow sits up beside his mamma and pays the best attention to all that is said and done. One would think, by his grave brown eyes, that Eddie was as deep in theology as the minister himself.

On a recent Sabbath, when the minister waxed more eloquent than usual, and was going on finely with fervent speech and impassioned gestures, Eddie's little heart got too full for repression; he kept climbing up until he stood on the seat by his mother's side, and at length, in the very height of the eloquence, he threw his arms about her neck and exclaimed, "*oh,—don't—him—p'each—it—nice, mamma!*" *H. A. B.*

For the Myrtle.

A Wise Choice.

One of our good ministers, whom we will not name, while sitting at the dinner table with his family, had these words said to him by his son, a lad of eleven years: "Father, I have been thinking, if I could have one single wish of mine, what I would choose."

"To give you a better chance," said the father, "suppose the allowance increased to three wishes; what would they be? Be careful, Charley!"

He made his choice, thoughtfully, first, of a good conscience; second, of good health; and third, of a good education.

His father suggested to him that fame, power, riches, and various other things, are held in general esteem among mankind.

"I have thought of all that," said he, "but if I have a good conscience, and good health, and a good education, I shall be able to earn all the money that will be of any use to me, and everything else will come along in its right place."

A wise decision, indeed, for a lad of that age. Let our young readers think of it, and profit by it. *Rev. J. G. Adams.*

It is only by labor that thought can be made healthy; and only by thought that labor can be made happy.

For the Myrtle.

Birds' Nests.

"COUSIN MAGGIE," said Georgie Benson on day, "I wish I had a collection of birds' eggs; Henry Ashton has one."

"Where did he get it?" asked Maggie.

"Oh! out of the birds' nests," said Georgie; "he takes one egg from a nest when he finds one, and now he has a great many different kinds of eggs in his box."

"But don't the birds *care*?" asked Maggie.

"I suppose not," said Georgie doubtfully, "he doesn't take but one at a time, you know."

"Don't you remember how that poor robin cried when we only peeped into her nest in the sweet apple tree last spring?" said Maggie.

"Yes, I do," answered George.

"I think they *care*," continued Maggie, "of course she thought we were going to trouble her eggs, or she wouldn't have made that sad noise."

"I don't think they would know if only *one* was gone," said Georgie.

"If they didn't *know* it," said Maggie stoutly, "the eggs are theirs, and they ought to have

them; and if they didn't miss *one*, some boy might take another one, and another boy one more, and then they'd be sure to know it, wouldn't they?"

"Of course they would," said Georgie.

"And then they'd be very unhappy, wouldn't they?" said Maggie.

"I suppose so," said Georgie.

"If you owned an egg collection, you might have been the means of making a great many birds unhappy, and I'm glad you haven't one," said Maggie.

"I don't care nearly as much for one now, as I did," said Georgie.

"I wonder if the birds care anything for their old nests?" asked Maggie.

"I don't know," said Georgie, "there's papa, let's ask him," and away they ran to inquire of Mr. Benson what he thought about it.

He told them that during the winter the storms and winds beat the nests so much to pieces, that he thought that by spring they were usually unfit for the birds to keep house in, even if they wished to do so.

"Then we can made a collection of *them*, can't we, uncle," said Maggie.

"If you like," repled Mr. Benson. "It is now so late in the fall, or rather so early in the winter, that there will be no more use for birds' nests *this* year. Different kinds of birds make different kinds of nests, and you may learn something interesting of the habits of birds while doing so."

"Now we must tell Katie," said Maggie.

They found her just starting in search of them. She was as much interested in the new enterprise as they could wish, and proposed going at once for the robin's nest in the sweet apple tree. That, and one a little smaller, that had been the habitation of a little brown chipping-bird, they found on the orchard trees. Circumstances were very favorable to their undertaking. The next day Mr. Benson brought them a curiously built nest from the meadow. As he held it in his hand it looked like a bouquet of dried grass. The birds had chosen a luxuriant tuft of grass, and near the top of it had placed their nest, twining the longer sprays of grass over it. The nest itself was systematically woven of blades of dried grass, and so nicely poised that it hung over and forward just enough to hide the small round hole which formed the entrance.

"What bird built that, papa!" asked Katie.

"I am not sure that I know," replied Mr. Benson. "I have seen an oven bird's nest that looked like this one, but that was built in a bush, and I don't know as they ever build in the grass as this one is built."

"How did you find this nest, Uncle?" asked Maggie.

"I almost stumbled upon it in my path this morning," replied Mr. Benson, "as I was looking around the meadow to see if anything had been left there that ought to be brought in for winter."

A few days after this, Georgie came in with his face glowing with pleasure, and handed his cousin a small piece of a mossy oak branch.

"I don't want that stick!" said Maggie.

"Stick!" said George, "look again, there's a humming-bird's nest there."

Maggie did look again, and saw a tiny nest lined with hair. The outside of it was completely covered with the kind of moss that grew on the wood, making it look to a careless observer like nothing more than a moss-covered knot.

"Where did you get it?" exclaimed both of the girls together.

"Henry Ashton got it. He climbed a tree in his father's grove, and cut this off for me with his jack-knife," said Georgie.

"How did he ever find it?" asked Katie.

"He told me he watched a humming-bird that used to visit his mother's flower-bed until he saw her go to this nest, then he marked the tree, and got one of the eggs for his collection," replied Georgie.

"What do they look like?" inquired Maggie.

"They are yellow and about as big as a white bean, I should think," said Georgie.

With some help from Mr. Benson an oriole's pretty hanging nest was taken from the old elm tree overshadowing the door, and added to their store. Although their collection was not as pleasing to look at as a collection of birds' eggs, they had the satisfaction of knowing that no little bird was mourning for what they had taken. They learned many interesting things of the birds as Mr. Benson told them they would.

They learned that the bluebirds always build in holes of trees or boxes built for them. A man told them that every year the bluebirds take possession of a box he had prepared for the martins. The latter coming later than the blue-

birds, are much enraged at finding their house tenanted, and drive the intruders away.

They observed that while some birds built very neat, and even beautiful nests, others, like the partridge, snipe, and woodcock, only scrape a few leaves and sticks together on the ground. One kind of swallows had left a row of mud or clay nests under the eaves of the barn. Another kind had left on the beams inside the barn, nests much like a robin's. So much interested were they in trying to learn something of the feathered tribe, that Mr. Benson promised to procure an ornithology for them to read, hoping that they might be instructed as well as amused thereby.

H. H. D.

Our Sunday Schools.

MAINE.

Our friends at Hiram have a new church, the munificent gift of a lady, Miss Susan Spring, of Brownfield. There is a small church and society there, small in means but strong in faith and zeal. Their ability will of course be taxed in completing the church with its furnishings and in supporting worship afterward. They hope to dedicate the new church on Christmas. They are laboring faithfully in the Sunday School, which is also small, but zealous, and increasing in numbers. A private letter to one of our friends of the School Street Church in this city, states these facts, and says, "Cannot a way be found to help us to library books? Have you in your school library, no old books that can be spared for ours? Out of our need we make bold to appeal to you." The School Street School will undoubtedly respond with such books as they can spare. Are there not other schools that can do likewise? Since a woman has done so much for the church there would it not be a graceful way to thank her if our sisters everywhere should render some kindly service in this way for the Sunday School. There is scarcely a school or a home among our people who could not spare at least one book for this school.

The Universalist Sabbath School and Bible Class at South Auburn, Me., assisted by members of the Upper Gloucester School, closed their Fall Term recently with an excellent concert, enjoyed by a large assembly. The Superintendent, Dr. D. B. Strout, received a present of an elegant gold-headed ebony cane, on the occasion.

NEW YORK.

——The *Leader* has the following pleasant notice of a Christmas gift made beforehand to the children of the Mission School in that city. We trust every one of this "little six hundred" will be remembered on or before the holidays.

"The Superintendent of our Mission School receives this note;

N. Y., Nov. 23, 1871.

DEAR SIR:—Please accept the accompanying one hundred trimmed hats for the children of your Mission School. With kind wishes, MRS. A. SHUMWAY.

13 Pike St.

How glad this handsome present will make the children, can only be known by those who saw the effect of that kind lady's similar donations of last year and the preceding. Mrs. Shumway has the hearty thanks of all the workers at the Mission. Her gift, too, is just in time for the Holidays To prepare a little 'Christmas' for each child of that 'six hundrod,' arrangements must begin early; and donations are sometimes received too late to be used to the best advantage. It is hoped that those intending to send anything for Christmas, will notify the teacher sthis week or next."

PENNSYLVANIA.

We have most cheering accounts from Titusville. where Rev. J. M. Bailey is pastor. The Society has just held a fair and festival at which four hundred dollars was secured, which will be applied to the purchase of library and class books for the Sunday School. That is a very fine sum for the purpose, and how could it give so much pleasure as in good books? The church has also a new, fine-toned bell, and will soon have a clock in the tower with face illuminated at night, which shall tell the time to the whole town by night and day. The Sunday School and Bible Class are prosperous, as well they may be with such helps. They have just formed a Teachers' Association which promises to be of great benefit And, by the way, no school ought to be without some kind of a Teachers' Association with its own meetings for the furtherance of the school interests.

OHIO.

——The Universalist Sunday Schools in Ohio are making contributions to the new (Buchlel) College in that State; and they are doing well. The indications are, that quite an amount of aid will thus be rendered to the institution. Here is a lively letter on the subject from an officer of one of the Sunday Schools, published in the *Star in the West:*

PERU, O., Oct. 30, 1871.—You will recollect that I promised twenty-five cents a scholar from our Sunday School at the State Convention. After this long time I am ready to report. When I asked for it I requested them to earn it in some way that they might better realize they had given something, so promised them time; and it would amuse you to hear them tell as they handed me the money how they earned it, especially the little ones. I will enclose eight dollars as twenty-five cent contributions. I should have had more, but some had rather give more than this small amount, and your agent here has taken it. Over twenty dollars has been given by our School besides this I send you. I know this is but a small amount for such a building, yet if every School would do as well according to its numbers, you would have a nice little sum. *Mrs. Abbie E. Danforth.*

The Helper.

The Sunday School *Helper* has had the pluck to issue all its numbers regularly, notwithstanding its burning out. It commences the new year under embarrassment, of course, but bravely, and with good prospects. Aside from its lessons which are used in so many schools, this is a magazine for every teacher, and we wish it could be in the hands of vastly more than it is. No other publication in our order fills that place, and it not only deserves the patronage of every Sunday School worker, but such patronage would enable the publishers to do better things for it than ever before. There is no reason, but the want of thorough sympathy and co-operation, why we should not have the best possible magazine for our Sunday School teachers.

——There are 300,000 children in Wisconsin who do not attend the Sunday Schools.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXVI.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.—PART I.

"The people which sat in darkness, saw great light."

SCRIPTURE, — John viii. 12–30.

Question. — Where did Jesus teach on the day after the Feast of the Tabernacles?

Answer. — John viii. 20.

Q. — What were his first words?

A. — John viii. 12.

NOTE. The treasury was in the court of the women in the Temple. It is said that the Jewish women spent one of the nights of the Feast of Tabernacles in festivities, the place where the festivities were held, being lighted by candles burnt in golden candlesticks. Possibly these candlesticks, together with fragments of the candles, afforded Christ the figure in which to state the truth—"I am the light of the *world.*" The word *world* was the most emphatic word, for Jesus was saying that he did not come to save a single nation but the whole world. The Jews were too blind to see this, and this fact affords us a key to conversation between Jesus and the Jews in this discourse.

Q. — What should those have who followed Christ?

A. — John viii. 12.

NOTE. Jesus was the light of the world, and those who followed him would walk in the glorious light by which the whole world was to be lighted.

Q. — When the Pharisees said his testimony of himself was not true because he had no corroborating witness, what did Jesus say to them?

A. — John viii. 17, 18.

Q. — What question did they then ask him in scorn?

A. — John viii. 19.

Q. — What did Jesus assure them they would be unable to do?

A. — John viii. 21.

NOTE. Paul and Barnabus, (Acts xiii. 46, 47,) told the opposing Jews that as they refused the life of God, they would turn to the Gentiles. Jesus spoke of his death here; and in another place he said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." As Jesus had spoken of himself as the light of the whole world, he assured the Jews that they would be unable to follow him in love to the Gentiles unless they believed him to be the Messiah.

Q. — What would happen to them if they did not believe?

A. — John viii. 21, 24.

NOTE. In illustration of the meaning of these words, see John xiii. 36.

Q. — Were they heavenly or earthy in their views and spirit?

A. — John viii. 23.

Q. — When should they know that he was the Messiah?

A. — John viii. 28.

This is a part of a series of discourses in which Christ testifies to his divine origin and sinlessness, and to the cause of Jewish unbelief in him.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

I am composed of twenty-nine letters.

My 18, 29, 14. 1, 5, was the place to which Paul and Barnabus fled from Lystra.

My 6, 16, 27, 7, 29, 9, was called Belteshazza by the Chaldeans.

My 13, 6, 24, 10, 29, 4. married a daughter of Saul.

My 12. 2, 19, 26, 21, 23. 14. was one of the first seven deacons.

My 9, 15, 24, 5, is the name of a ruined city.

My 3, 4, 20, 11, 25, the Scriptures forbid to be eaten.

My whole will be found of great service by all students o the Bible.

Answers.

DEC. 9. Herodias; Ananias; Lazarus; Lot's; Elisha; Lydia; Uriah; Isaac; Agrippa; Hezekiah. Halleluiah.

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